



Congressman

# RAUL M. GRIJALVA

Serving the people of Arizona's 7th District

## SSI Restoration Act H.R. 3824



### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over eight million Americans, all of them at least age 65 or with significant disabilities who are unable to earn enough to meet their basic needs, rely on the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for their survival. Unfortunately, at present, it provides income that is below the poverty line. Over time SSI has become an increasingly important program for seniors, and persons with disabilities, including children.

SSI was created to replace the patchwork system of federal grants to states which aided the aged, blind, or disabled. For disability applications, state agencies called Disability Determination Services (DDSs) screen the medical and related evidence to judge whether the applicant meets the criteria set in law — essentially, whether he or she suffers from a severe impairment that will last at least 12 months or result in death and that makes it impossible to engage in substantial work. A basic problem is that the program is still designed for 1972, the year it was signed into law by President Nixon. The financial constraints are so stiff that a growing number of older SSI recipients are homeless.

This bill restores a program that plays a key role in the security of millions of Americans. Specifically, it modernizes and improves SSI by streamlining and simplifying the claiming process, expanding the resources and income limits, and eliminating punitive reductions in benefits.



### FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT THE BILL

1. Includes an increase in the general income disregard to \$128 per month and earned income disregard to \$416 per month as well as an increase in the resource limit to \$10,000 for an individual and \$20,000 for an eligible couple.
2. Elimination of an undue burden by repealing the provision which included in-kind support and maintenance as income as well as the penalties for resource transfer and marriage and state tax credits.
3. Eliminates the separate account requirement, allowing dedicated account payments to go to the same account of the smaller lump-sum and ongoing payments.
4. Streamlines lump-sum and back payments by eliminating the installment payment requirement to allow past due benefits to be paid at once and extending the amount of time that retroactive payments are excluded from countable resources.
5. Does away with intrusive investigations into recipients' personal lives by eliminating 'holding out' provision that requires SSA to determine if two people living together should be treated as married for SSI benefits.

### Supporting Organizations:

1. AARP
  2. AFL-CIO
  3. AFSCME Retirees
  4. American Association of People with Disabilities
  5. American Society on Aging
  6. Paralyzed Veterans of America
  7. The Special Needs Alliance
  8. SEIU
  9. National Council on Aging
  10. Strengthen Social Security Coalition
- and over 100+ more organizations